



The Idea of America: Reflections on the Birth of the United States

Gordon S. Wood

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The preeminent historian of the Founding Era reflects on the birth of American nationhood and explains why the American Revolution remains so essential.

For Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Gordon S. Wood, the American Revolution is the most important event in our history, bar none. Since American identity is so fluid, we have had to continually return to our nation's founding to understand who we are. In a series of illuminating essays, he explores the ideological origins of the Revolution—from Ancient Rome to the *European* Enlightenment—and the founders' attempts to forge a democracy. He reflects on the origins of American exceptionalism, the radicalism and failed hopes of the founding generation, and the “terrifying gap” between us and the men who created the democratic state we take for granted. This is a profoundly revealing look at the event that forged the United States and its enduring power to define us.

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